Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"War is not likely to be abolished by governments. Only the people who have freed themselves from their governments can do it."

—JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

Vol. 17, No. 19 **May 12th, 1956** **Threepence**

AUTOMATION

—Slavery or Liberty; Mechanical Hell or the Free Society?

THE second great industrial revolution in the history of British capitalism is beginning to get under way. The first brought mechanisation and reached its highest peak in chaining workers to machines on which they perform, mechanically and as refined by time and motion study, repetitive actions at speeds dictated by the machines. Such workers are vitally part of the machines, sometimes more adaptable than the machine itself but usually not so reliable. They are, however, cheaper in that they require no capital outlay chargeable directly on the employer. They can be hired without any deposit and fired when no longer needed.

In spite of these advantages, however, the human element in industry represents a weakness in the bosses' organisation. For the workers themselves have created organisations and have properties which machines do not have and which the employers would rather they did not have.

Workers have wills of their own; they sometimes have social consciences and a sense of justice and of solidarity; they have appetites and families with appetites. In a word they have interests which do not coincide with those of their employers, who consequently cannot be sure that there will never be a conflict of interests to interfere with production and the flow of profit, for which the employer is organising the whole business.

Eliminate the Workers

The second industrial revolution is going to eliminate this weakness in capitalist production. Not by eliminating the conflict of interests between employer and employee but, much more simply, by eliminating the employees. Automation represents the final stage in mechanisation by which the machine takes over the performance of the repetitive actions hitherto carried out by the human hand. Not only that; it takes over the functions of the skilled eye and brain.

On the automated production line, parts are fed in for processing more rapidly, consistently and accurately than by any operator, and are checked, passed or rejected (with a smaller proportion of rejects) more quickly and surely than by any human inspector. These machines do not have to stop for tea-breaks, meal-times or to perform any natural functions. They do not have to be bribed to work by the provision of canteens, welfare schemes, sports grounds or music-while-you-work. They will never need pensions when they are worn out. They do not have to be divided in order to be ruled; they will co-operate without feeling their power. They do not have to be consulted on any decision; they will not develop restrictive practices and provided that the electronic brain controlling them is never driven neurotic by being fed false information, they will never go on strike.

Rose-tinted Spectacles

Automation, in a word, seems to be the answer to the employer's prayer. The one force in the factory which can compete with him for control of the working processes is going to be reduced to a handful of technicians (who will be few enough to be bought by being given a substantial interest in the firm) and a relatively small number of labourers or semi-skilled workers who will be easily replaceable.

The tremendous cost of capitalising an automotive factory will very quickly be regained through increased output, or even the same output with greatly reduced running costs—of which by far the biggest to-day is labour.

This is looking at things from the employers' point of view and through rose-tinted spectacles. The actual implications of automation for capitalism are, however, far more complicated and sinister, and they are dealt with in detail elsewhere on this page. From this it may be seen that automation will, sooner or later, bring about such a crisis for capitalism that nothing short of a far-reaching revolution can provide the solution.

The Reformist Organisations

THE first impact of industrialisation in this country—the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century—brought immesurable suffering to the working population. Out of that suffering were born the defensive and revolutionary movements which have, in the end, presented us with the reformist organisations of to-day—the trade unions and the political parties of the Left. In accordance with the technical and political developments up to date, these organisations have served a limited purpose.

The development of automation, however, will find the world a very different place from what it was 100 years ago, and in face of the problems which it will create, the political, social and economic organisations which seemed far-reaching then and which have developed now, will be hopelessly out-of-date. The technical revolution which faces us to-day will demand social and economic developments in keeping with its tremendous advances. As the techniques of to-morrow will supersede those of to-day, so must a new pattern of social and economic life replace the inadequate institutions of the present. Even the welfare state, still novel and revolutionary to some, will be out-moded before it becomes traditional.

A Weak Position

What is the situation in which the workers find themselves when faced with this new challenge? It is, alas, as if they were called upon to fight tanks with bows and arrows. They are not out-numbered, but they have been out-thought. They have spent the last fifty years perfecting weapons which are now obsolete and which have in any case been bought over by the enemy.

The trade union movement of to-day is bereft of ideas. There has been not one single statement from the TUC to show its dues-paying members that it recognises that automation is going to revolutionise our society, or that it has the foggiest notion of what to do about it. The Labour Party and the Communist Party are more concerned in making political capital out of economic troubles under the Tories than with seriously thinking out a constructive policy by which automation can be a blessing instead of a curse.

These, and indeed all, authoritarian organisations see the developments of new techniques only in terms of the advantage offered to the power interests they serve—grip upon markets or spheres of influence, opportunity for trade and profit, one-up-manship over competitors, or power politics. Never do they consider the well-being of the community or even that proportion of it immediately affected by the changes.

Co-operation, not Competition

Our politicians will talk of the winning back of markets through our ability to compete more strongly. If this does in fact come about it means that not only workers here, but those in other countries will be thrown out of work as well. (Not *instead of*, but *as well*). Competition always means that if somebody is winning, somebody else is losing. Only through co-operation can everybody win, and if world society (and we must think in global terms to-day) is to benefit from automation then men and women the world over must learn to co-operate instead of competing.

This, however is in contradiction to the principles of capitalism. It is contrary to the struggle for markets, to the manipulation of money, to the very nature of the money and wages system, for it is only through these that exploitation can be successfully carried out—and exploitation is essentially competitive. Above all co-operation is an opposite principle to that of authority.

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The Implications for Capitalism

WITH the advance of automation in industry have come varying appraisals of its likely impact upon the employment of Labour and the economy of nations. The many views put forward have differed widely; from the wildest optimist who believes that a superlative standard of living is now just round the corner, to the more realistic pessimist who thinks that a certain amount of unemployment may ensue. All appraisals have had one aspect in common in that they have taken neither a sufficiently broad, nor long-term point of view. The really devastating results which automation can bring to a world-economy based on capitalism have been totally ignored, and it has therefore been unnecessary for anyone to put forward any possible solutions to the problem; for in fact the real problem has not as yet been presented.

Under capitalism it is always necessary that the demand should exceed the supply, for if it fails to do so a situation is created where there is too much production for existing buying power—production is then decreased which automatically produces unemployment and decreases buying power still further. Thus a rapid downward spiral develops which ends in a slump. On occasions since the industrial revolution there have been slumps from which capitalism has recovered, and near-slumps which have been avoided by various means (usually re-armament and/or war); and nowadays of necessity governments keep a very tight control on the over-all economy of their countries in order to avoid serious crises of this nature.

Automation however can induce a situation far more serious than those in the past. For not only does it increase production, but *at the same time* increases unemployment and reduces buying power. In the expanding economy of the past, machinery and mechanical aids to production in general, have always been sufficiently limited in function to maintain employment at a high enough level for capitalism to scrape through such crises—if only by the skin of its teeth. But never before has it had such a formidable enemy to overcome, nor been so unaware of the existence of the enemy.

Automation has in fact been hailed by capitalists as the answer to their labour troubles, and by their governments as the solution to economic problems both at home and abroad. This is very far from reality though at first sight it may appear to be so. As a *short-term* policy in a competitive world-market it appears to be sound, and the argument is along the following lines:

Automation produces more goods at less cost, and involves less labour, therefore it is possible to undercut prices in foreign markets, and absorb the surplus labour in other industries; this effectively increases the strength of the economy by increased foreign trade, and expands home production because full employment is maintained. What is not explained is what happens when the countries who are being undercut out of the market also become "automated" in the same industries, *as they must in order to survive*, and at the same time more and more industries at home become "automated" also.

Patently there is a limit to the possible degree of "world-automation", with its consequent unemployment problem, after which, under the capitalist system, a serious world economic crisis becomes inevitable.

Here then is the probable devastating prospect brought forth by the advent of automation on an increasing scale. Within the next two decades capitalism may be faced with the greatest economic crisis it has ever known, and if it fails to find a solution it may perish.

It is reasonable to suppose however, that the capitalists of the world will not allow a system which has been built up over so many years, simply to destroy itself, without making every effort to maintain its existence. What action will be taken by governments—who are of course the prime supporters of capitalism—is a matter for conjecture, but in general terms there cannot be a great many alternatives for a system which is based upon power and authoritarianism, competition and the profit motive.

The most obvious way out of an economic crisis such as is envisaged, is the classic manœuvre of going to war. This will have the effect of using up the products of automation more rapidly than any other known method, and in the past has simultaneously disposed of surplus labour power. But the waging of war has become an increasingly difficult task in the last few years, for war itself can nowadays so easily destroy that which it is designed to preserve.

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Policies From Above

SO far, our Labour leaders have given voice to a lot of vague burblings about the need for plans and policies by employers or government, but never a constructive idea given to the workers themselves.

Last week-end the 'Labour Movement' was celebrating May Day and several spokesmen made references to automation.

In Birmingham Bryn Roberts, gen. sec. of the National Union of Public Employees said: "There should be a national plan for the orderly application of automation and the protection of the labour force. Each company should be compelled to conform to such a plan."

R. H. S. Crossman, Labour M.P. for Coventry East, also in Birmingham, told his audience that the unions and the Labour Party 'ought to have their plan ready' for automation. 'If we are going to have it without ruthless redundancies and lay-offs,' he said, 'we have got to be able to tell you precisely how we shall deal with the problems of transfer of labour or short time or whatever action may be necessary.'

At Devonport, Labour Party leader Hugh Gaitskell, demanded "a proper plan worked out by the Government in collaboration with the trades unions and with industry."

And so on and so on. Always the cry for plans laid down from above to guide us into our ordained pigeon-holes without too much bother. It is taken for granted that *they* are going to organise our lives for us and protect us from the worst excesses of the crazy system they support.

The thought that maybe automation will demand a different kind of system altogether does not seem to occur to them.

The Robot Strike at Standards

THE first major strike against redundancy caused by automation in this country has already hit the motor-car industry.

All the 11,000 production workers employed by the Standard Motor Company in Coventry went on strike on April 26. They protested that shop stewards had not been given the opportunity of discussing with the management a proposal for short-time working offered as a substitute for the laying-off of several hundred workers during the summer. Five thousand people struck at the Banner Lane Factory, where tractors are produced, and 6,000 at the Canley car works.

It was at first announced that 2,500 employees were to be temporarily laid off this summer for periods of up to four months because of a change in tractor production; a new and heavier type of tractor is to be manufactured. It is understood that this figure has now been increased to 2,900, and that the company has notified shop stewards that there will be no short-time working during the changeover.

The strikers claimed that the management had agreed to consult the shop stewards before taking action—but Mr. Alick Dick, Standards managing director, denied this and bluntly stated that 'We are not spending £4 million on new tractor plant in order to employ the same number of men. We don't carry people for fun.'

It should be noted that the workers are not demanding full employment for all existing employees—they are asking that the existing work be shared equally among them all, instead of some being unemployed completely.

The changes being made by Standards are considerable. Robot machinery specially made in Germany to the firm's specifications is being installed—getting into the factory in convoy with police protection.

This shows the weakness of the walk-out strike. The workers are all on the outside, while inside the bosses are free to go ahead and make their alterations. They *wanted* the workers outside the Banner Lane factory while the change-over was being made! True, the workers are withholding their labour from the firm's car division as well, but with the present falling off in car sales even that isn't hurting the company as it might.

The strikers are aiming for official recognition from the union, and at the time of writing this is probably going to be granted. This will bring them strike pay and enable them to hang out much longer.

Delegates from the strike committee are touring the country appealing for support by any means, pointing out quite rightly that if the bosses win here the principle that they are free to sack workers as they please, the green light will go on throughout industry.

The Coventry strikers are standing out for a purely negative position—the right to be consulted when there is redundancy and to share their hardship between them.

What we are waiting to see is their demand for the positive right to have a voice in the control of policy at all times.

VIEWPOINT FROM AMERICA

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SCIENTISTS

THE serious magazines are filled these days with discussions of the responsibilities of scientists. Most of the articles are by scientists, which may be taken as a good sign, and the attitudes expressed vary all the way from exhortations to high duty to mankind to somewhat aggrieved resistance to the idea that scientists are in any way answerable for the use men and nations make of their discoveries.

Writing in a defensive mood, Joel H. Hildebrand, president of the American Chemical Society, started out in a paper printed in the *American Scientist* for July, 1955, by quoting Lewis Mumford's explanation of the "historic" separation of scientists from what may be termed "moral" questions. Mumford recalls that the Royal Society of London, chartered by Charles II to pursue "the Promotion of Natural Knowledge," resolved "at its very inception to confine its discussion and experiments to the field of the natural sciences, and to omit all concern with matters that traditionally belong to theology and history." Although this decision was made "in the name of scientific freedom in the seventeenth century," it was, Mumford believes, "a fatal choice," since, "in defining scientific truth, in the terms Galileo and Descartes defined it, as a truth detached from all considerations of purpose, value, or practical application, science cut itself off from all human concerns except those of science itself."

It is Mumford's view that this habitual outlook on the part of scientists made them unable, in the twentieth century, to meet the crisis which both they and the statesmen of the world precipitated by the development and use of atomic bombs. This is Mumford's reproach to the men of science:

> To have aroused fully to the extent of political invention and moral rehabilitation needed to provide even a minimal security, the actions of the scientists would have had to speak louder than words. They would have to close ther laboratories, give up their researches, renounce their careers, defy their governments, possibly endure martyrdom, if they were to convey to the public the full urgency of their convictions. Here the new sense of social responsibility failed to overcome the neutralist habits of many lifetimes. Even those who were most deeply disturbed by the possible misapplications of science continued to apply themselves to science. And while "science as usual" prevailed, it was fanciful to hope that "business as usual" and "politics as usual" could be shaken out of their rut.

Whether or not Mumford, in his paper read in 1954 before the American Philosophical Society, which Hildebrand quotes, advocates that scientists attempt to anticipate and to control the uses to which their findings will be put, his critic soon shows the impracticability of recognizing the destructive potentialities at the moment of discovery. Otto Hahn, who with Lise Meitner discovered the principle of uranium fission in 1939, was not engaged in military research, and who, asks Hildebrand, "could have had either the prescience or the right to order them to desist?" So with many other discoveries which were later found to have a military use.

But Hahn, it is well to note, was one of the few atomic physicists—the first, in fact—who would not put his talents at the service of the military. He refused to work for the Germans on weapons research and was, according to French scientists, "a staunch 'passive resister' to Nazi pressure."

Thus, while there can be no moratorium on science, pending the development of mechanisms for controlling the use of new inventions, individuals can and doubtless will exercise some control over the direction of research, and they may even suppress discoveries which they regard as precocious to their times. In the *Atlantic* for January, 1947, Norbert Wiener told how he refused to share with another scientist a paper he had written concerning "controlled missiles," stating his conviction that the development of such weapons "can do nothing but endanger us by encouraging the tragic insolence of the military mind." He added:

> If therefore I do not desire to participate in the bombing or poisoning of defenceless peoples—and I most certainly do not—I must take a serious responsibility as to those to whom I disclose my scientific ideas.

Wiener explained that while his paper could doubtless be obtained from some other source, he welcomed an opportunity to "raise this serious moral issue," and continued:

> I do not expect to publish any future work of mine which may do damage in the hands of irresponsible militarists.
>
> I am taking the liberty of calling this letter to the attention of other people in scientific work. I believe it is only proper that they should know of it in order to make their own independent decisions, if similar situations should confront them.

The New York *Times* called Wiener "the first great scientist to announce publicly his withdrawal from military research," and noted Wiener's recollection that the bombing of Hiroshima "was done against the expressed recommendation of the scientists who built the atomic bomb, and who still believe that a demonstration on an uninhabited Pacific isle might have made unnecessary the death of 200,000 Japanese."

Einstein, shortly before he died, spoke of the possibility that he, in a world like the present one, might choose to be a plumber or a peddler, rather than a physicist who would share in the dreadful responsibilities of thermo-nuclear warfare, and some American physicists announced soon after the bombing of Japan that if they were not permitted some voice in deciding the use to be made of their discoveries, they might renounce atomic research for an elaborate study of butterflies' wings!

While only a few distinguished individuals have spoken out in this way, there is an unmistakable groundswell of anxiety among scientists. And the atomic bomb, while touching off these tendencies into occasional resistance, is not the only cause of deep reflection on the part of workers in research. Norbert Wiener, again, of cybernetics fame, tells in his autobiography (*I Am a Mathematician*) how he pondered the question of what would happen to human beings under widespread automation:

> While cybernetics and the automatic factory were from the strictly scientific point of view not as revolutionary as the bomb, their social possibilities for good and for evil were enormous. I tried to see where my duties led me, and if by any chance I ought to exercise a right of personal secrecy parallel to the right of government secrecy assumed in high quarters, suppressing my ideas and the work I had done.
>
> After toying with the notion for some time, I came to the conclusion that this was impossible, for the ideas which I possessed belonged to the times rather than to myself. If I had been able to suppress every word of what I had done, they were bound to reappear in the work of other people, very possibly in a form in which the philosophic significance and the social dangers would be stressed less. I could not get off the back of this broncho, so there was nothing for me to do but ride it.
>
> I thus decided that I would have to turn from a position of the greatest secrecy to a position of the greatest publicity, and bring to the attention of the public all the possibilities and dangers of the new developments.

This attitude of responsibility on the part of a scientist is not really new. In the eighteenth century, Denis Diderot—who, if not a scientist, was certainly a contributor to the scientific spirit of modern times—was tortured by a similar moral problem. Carl Becker devotes a chapter of his *Every Man His Own Historian* to Diderot's dilemma, which consisted in a choice between what Diderot regarded as scientific truth, and sound morality. Following the mood of the science of his times, Diderot has constructed a "philosophy" of man which anticipated the mechanistic notion of human behaviour. Becker describes the consequences:

> . . . the speculative thinking of Diderot, of which the principal purpose was to furnish a firm foundation for natural morality, ended by destroying the foundation of morality as he understood it. This was the dilemma, that if the conclusions of Diderot the speculative philosopher were valid, the aspirations of Diderot the moral man, all the vital purposes and sustaining hopes of his life, were but as the substance of a dream. For reason told him that man was after all but a speck of sentient dust, a chance deposit on the surface of the world, the necessary product of the same purposeless forces that build up crystal or dissolve granite. Aspiration, love and hope, sympathy, the belief in virtue itself—what were these but the refined products of mechanical processes, spiritual perfumes, as it were, arising from the alternate waste and repair of brain tissue? Freedom was surely a chimera if the will could be defined as "the last impulse of desire and aversion." And "if there is no such thing as liberty, there is no action which merits praise or blame: there is neither vice nor virtue, nothing which can properly be rewarded or punished. What is it then that distinguishes men? Good action and bad action. The bad man is one whom it is necessary to destroy rather than to punish: good action is good fortune but not virtue." . . .

Becker speculates about Diderot's relations with his daughter, a young girl to whom he was devoted. He imagines Diderot spending his mornings "explaining the soul in terms of matter and motion"; then, in the afternoon, "transformed into the doting father, coming forth to teach his child a 'great deal of morality,' as he walks with her in the park." The picture is engaging:

> This very morning, perhaps, he committed to cold paper that desolating doctrine about the will—"last impulse of desire and aversion." And what is the moral instruction which this philosophy inspires him to convey to his daughter in the afternoon? Something original, surely, something profound, at the very least something unconventional? Not at all. Excellent bourgeois that he is, he tells her to be a good girl! So strangely remote sometimes, as Diderot found, is philosophy from life.
>
> What use to preach "a great deal of morality" to a creature whose will is nothing but "the last impulse of desire and aversion"? This was the question which came to stare Diderot in the face about the year 1765; and about the year 1765 he ceased to publish.

Diderot for all his scientific interests was still a literary man, with a sense of full personal responsibility. There is a difference between the modern idea of responsibility in relation to scientific knowledge and this individual attitude. Scientific knowledge is essentially impersonal. It is believed to result from the slow accretion of contributions from countless individuals whose identity may even be lost or forgotten. Science is in this sense institutional, and for the individual practitioner already possesses an imposing sovereignty. It is difficult for him to think of any "individual responsibility" for science as a whole. And, as with other forms of sovereignty, science has acquired a kind of magical prestige in which some scientists take considerable pleasure, while others warn against the institutional egotism it provides.

(*Manas*, Los Angeles).

(*To be concluded*)

There's Money in Oil—2

The Royal Dutch-Shell petroleum group sold 10 per cent. more oil last year than the year before and the net profit after taxation rose by 19 per cent. to £160 millions. Out of this dividends amounting to £33.4 millions were paid to the two parent companies, Royal Dutch and Shell, compared with £26.8 millions for 1954. The Shell company has now declared a final dividend of 10 per cent. and an extra dividend of 3¾ per cent., both free of tax, on the ordinary shares, bringing the total payment for 1955 up to 18¾ per cent., tax free, compared with 15 per cent., tax free, the year before. Moreover, stockholders are to be given one new share for each four shares now held, and the directors hope that the dividend rate of 15 per cent, per share can be maintained on the new capital: that is equal to the higher rate now paid on the old capital.

(*Manchester Guardian*).

The Tradition of Workers' Control — 3

BRITISH SYNDICALISM

ALTHOUGH it is true that most of the ideas of the classical syndicalist movement had been anticipated, there was something really distinctive about the new movement: its single-minded emphasis on the workers' trade union. With the possible exception of some of the Owenites, all the British forerunners of the syndicalists were puralistic in their conception of socialism. The reformists—the Co-operators and Christian Socialists—did not envisage the abolition of the political State; the revolutionaries— the libertarian socialists and anarchists—while opposing the State idea, did not see the trade union as the only form of organisation in the new society. The trade union was to be only one form among other forms of association—the State of the Commune, the Co-operative Society or the self-governing and spontaneous associations of men for various purposes. The syndicalists, in contrast, were essentially monistic. For them, the trade unions were the only form of organisation which the workers would need under socialism. All social as well as economic activity began and ended in the trade unions. Even where a territorial form of organisation was envisaged as playing its part alongside the functional form of organisation by industry, the unions, and the unions alone, were to be its constituent parts. In this respect, classical syndicalism may be regarded as a narrowing down of hitherto closely-allied ideas, a concentration of them in the one form of organisation which was most clearly related to the intimate and daily experience of the workers. From this concentration syndicalism gathered in strength and gained in clarity—at what, its critics claimed, was the sacrifice of comprehensiveness and other legitimate interests.

This single-minded emphasis on the trade union was the source of much of the distinctive ethos of the movement. The trade union was, at this time, a purely working class form of organisation. In contrast to the so-called workers' political parties or even revolutionary bodies such as the *Freedom* group, there was no place in it for anybody who was not a worker. Professional middle class intellectuals who frequently provided both the leadership and the ideas of the socialist political movement, were therefore at a discount. As a consequence the syndicalist movement was, and saw itself as, a purely working class form of socialism—or, as a *Freedom* editorial put it, 'A Working Class Conception of Socialism'[5]. In retrospect, therefore, syndicalism appears as the great heroic movement of the proletariat, the first movement which took seriously Marx's injunction that the emancipation of the working class must be the task of labour unaided by middle class intellectuals or by politicians and aimed to establish a genuinely working class socialism and culture, free of all bourgeois taints. For the syndicalists, the workers were to be everything, the rest, nothing. The world was to be a world of labour and a world for labour.

Industrial Unionism

Continental syndicalism came to be known as the revision of Marxism 'to the left' in contrast to Bernstein's 'revision to the right'. In these terms, Fabian-Labourism represents the British version of revision to the right. British revision to the left, which marks the beginning of modern syndicalism as a distinct movement in this country, may be dated from the split in the S.D.F. which took place in 1903, and which led to the formation of the Socialist Labour Party. Almost from the outset this party, centred chiefly in Scotland and the North, advocated the cause of industrial unionism and it must be given the credit for introducing this concept in any clear form into this country. Early in its history, the party came under the influence of the American Marxist, Daniel De Leon, and when the latter joined the Industrial Workers of the World, founded at Chicago in 1905, with a programme of militant industrial unionism and workers' control, the S.L.P. became the chief channel of communication between American 'syndicalism' and the British workers. The policy of the S.L.P. is best summed up in its statement: 'Having overthrown the class State, the industrial unions will furnish the administrative machinery for directing industry in the Socialist Commonwealth'[6].

In 1905 James Connolly, leader of the Irish Socialist Republican Party, established contact with the S.L.P. on the Clyde and it is in his writings that we find the clearest and most vigorous expression of the ideas dominant during the early phase of the movement. In *Socialism Made Easy* (1908), he argued that the function of industrial unionism was 'to build up an industrial republic inside the shell of the political state, in order that when the industrial republic is fully organised, it may crack the shell of the political state and step into its place in the scheme of the universe'[7]. Opposing State Socialism as bureaucratic and inimical to individual freedom, he stated that in the form of society he envisaged

> 'the administration of affairs will be in the hands of the representatives of the various industries of the nation . . . The workers in the shops and factories will organise themselves into unions, each union comprising all the workers at a given industry . . . (Each) union will democratically control the workshop life of its own industry, electing all foremen, eac., and regulating the routine of labour in that industry in subordination to the needs of society in general, to the needs of its allied trades, and to the departments of industry to which it belongs . . . Representatives from these various departments of industry will meet and form the industrial administration or national government of the country'[8].

In this industrial republic, the political State would have no place: state, territories, and provinces would exist only as geographical expressions. Such a conception of socialism, concluded Connolly, determined the strategy that the working class must pursue. Having realised that 'the workshop is the cockpit of civilisation', the workers would recognise that 'the fight for the conquest of the political state is not the battel, it is only of the political state is not the battle, it is only fought out every day for the power to control industry . . . '[9].

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THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY
Vol. 17, No. 19. May 12, 1956

19th Century Scapegoats

A GROWINGLY common explanation for the failure of radicalism in the twentieth century is that it is still living in the nineteenth. We should be more convinced of the validity of such criticisms if the arguments advanced in support were less vague, and if we could feel that the critics were not reflecting more their own personal frustration or even an unconscious move towards compromise with society as it is, than a dispassionate analysis of appraisal of developments in the past seventy or eighty years.

We must of course distinguish between the objectives, the methods and the propaganda. It is clear that in the mid-twentieth century we cannot talk the language of the late nineteenth, and that our methods, in view of changed circumstances, are also different, but we would submit that this difference is one of *emphasis*. At least so far as anarchists are concerned.

In their "Tract for the Times" the editors of the new American "independent monthly" *Liberation* (Mar. 1956) write:

"The changes of recent years—represented by atomic power and by the beginnings of the Second Industrial Revolution and also by the rise of totalitarianism—have filled many thoughtful persons with the strong suspicion that the problems of today must be attacked on a much deeper level than traditional Marxists, Communists and various kinds of Socialists and Anarchists have realized. Proposals and calls to action couched in the old terms fail any longer to inspire much hope or genuine human enthusiasm, because large numbers of people are aware, or dimly sense, that they do not touch the roots of the trouble.

There is no point, for example, in reshuffling power, because the same old abuses still persist under new masters. The vast energy devoted to reconstructing government is wasted if in a short time the new structure becomes as impervious to fundamental human decency and ethics as the old one. There is no doubt that there are forms of property relationships which are oppressive and destructive of true community, but if these are altered and the average individual finds his life as dull and empty as ever and the enslavement of his hours just as great, little or nothing has been achieved.

"It is increasingly evident that nineteenth century modes of thought are largely incapable of dealing with such questions. The changes which are going on in the modern world—which call into doubt many assumptions which almost all nineteenth century revolutionists and reformers took for granted—require also changes in our deepest modes of thought. We require a post-Soviet, post-H-bomb expression of the needs of to-day and a fresh vision of the world of peace, freedom and brotherhood in which they can be met."

What is interesting in this apparent critique of "nineteenth century modes of thought" is that at least the first two questions, the failure of the reshuffling of power, and the corruption of government, were as clearly understood by anarchists and revolutionary socialists of the 1870's as they appear to be to the editors of *Liberation* in the 1950's, and as to the concern with the possibility of lives "as dull and empty as ever" in spite of changes in "property relationships, etc. . . " such a possibility can only exist when one conceives these changes as being organised from above—surely a purely hypothetical suggestion!

We must be forgiven a smile at the ingenuousness of these twentieth century liberals and intellectuals who are just catching up with the nineteenth century revolutionary thinkers and who imagine that they have made new discoveries. This does not prevent us from welcoming them as brothers in the "wilderness"!

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COMMENTING on *Liberation*'s editorial, our comrade George Woodcock puts forward a number of interesting suggestions, among them, that the editors should have added to their critique of Marxism and Liberalism, one of "traditional anarchism" since he felt that "it is time to recognize that many of the Bakunist and even Kropotkinist dogmas—though not all by any means—are pointless and even harmful in the modern world, and to say so". He also suggests that a "good field of investigation" might be the subjects on which "socialists and anarchists thought the last word had been said". And he instances the question of Property:

'Was Proudhon, after all, right in insisting on the right of possession for the individual farmer or craftsman? Is Kropotkinist "communism" an adequate solution to the question, or should we perhaps envisage a pluralist form of economy, which might include communities, individual "possessors" (like the members of the Mexican *ejidos* co-operatives) and perhaps some modified form of syndicate? It does seem to me that a multiform society of this kind, admitting a varied approach to the means of work, seems more likely to come about, and more likely to allow continued growth, than a doctrinaire Kropotkinist solution.'

We too believe that "anarchist dogmas"—if such exist—should be re-examined in the light of the accumulated knowledge available to-day. But we would suggest that comrade Woodcock and the editors of *Liberation* cannot see the wood for trees. Important as are the issues of Property, Kropotkinist heresies or the rehabilitation of Proudhon, they are details which have only an indirect bearing on the main problem which faces us: *of how to break down the values which direct society to-day and to ensure that they are replaced by those values which we believe lead to freedom and happiness.*

The "scientific determinism" of the nineteenth century has been replaced by a kind of "scientific intellectualism" in the twentieth. We now live in a sociologist's and psycho-analyst's paradise. Every aspect of human behaviour and motivation, conscious and unconscious, individual and collective is being probed and explained. We know what are the best conditions for the schoolchild to grow into a healthy and happy young person; we know what conditions in the factory are conducive to creating the happy worker; we know quite a lot about the sex lives of a cross-section of the population to draw conclusions about the relation of sex to happiness and the full-life; we know a great deal about the physical problems of living to formulate plans for the planning of new towns and communities . . .

In a word, we know a great deal more about ourselves than those innocent nineteenth century revolutionists could have ever imagined to be possible. But neither could they have dreamt that with so much knowledge, twentieth century man would have been so inarticulate in advocating and applying it! That is the problem, the twentieth century problem, one of integrity (see FREEDOM 28/4/56), for whilst it is true, as *Liberation* points out, that the creation of a movement of dissent and social change in the United States (and elsewhere) is "impeded by a sustained, war-based prosperity, with millions of unionists making a living at war jobs" it is also true that tens of thousands of professional workers are carrying out their jobs in a way which they know to be contrary to the interests of the community, as well as being in conflict with their own consciences.

How can we make them feel that it is worth while risking their well-paid jobs (relatively, even a schoolmaster is well-paid), their status (according to middle-class standards) and their material comforts, for what they at present only intellectually believe to be right? That poverty with integrity is a happier state to be in than success with a duodenal ulcer!

★

IT may be that the radical of the mid-twentieth century has to discard the relics of his predecessors. But he has also much to learn. The impact of 19th century revolutionists on the social thinking of their time cannot simply be explained by saying that conditions were propitious (which would be tantamount to saying that the worse the situation the greater the chances of progress). We believe that they achieved a measure of success because they were prepared, and sufficiently convinced by their ideas and by their sense of justice, to "sacrifice everything for the cause"—(19th century language which makes our contemporaries smirk).

To-day our radicals want to have their cake and eat it, and their only achievement is respectibility and official recognition garnished with a thrombosis or intellectual dyspepsia!

EDUCATION IN AFRICA

EQUAL BUT SEPARATE

IT may be considered by some that the policy adopted at Rhodesia University College, Salisbury is a "move towards" equality in University life in the Commonwealth. But, in effect, it differs in detail only from the "equal but separate" facilities available for Negroes in some of the Southern States of America.

Coloured and white students will attend the same lectures at the University College, Salisbury, but will be segregated for meals and will live in separate houses. It is feasible that such an arrangement will lead to even more resentment than a complete segregation policy. African students must be reminded every day that while they are "allowed" the benefits of sharing lectures with white students eating with them is going too far.

Commander Noble, Commonwealth Relations Under-Secretary, when questioned on the separate living and eating accommodation, said that this was the first multi-racial university in the Federation, the Royal Charter of which set down that there should be no test of religion or race. But, he said, "there is certainly segregation. It is the desire of the people on the spot" . . . "This is multi-racial education in the full sense of the word." We confess that we are unable to follow Commander Noble's line of reasoning which is further weakened by the fact that Government funds helped to build the University which presumably means, that should they choose to do so the British Government could have a say in policy. The fact that the Government does not, indicates that the usual concessions are being made to 'the people on the spot', in other words the white community who benefit so much from colonisation and who are afraid that the 'natives' may get out of hand if granted the privilege of mixing on all levels with the herrenvolk.

It is argued that education facilities for the Africans, even when it involves segregation, is a great step forward towards equality. And while we have to agree that the opportunity for academic education for Africans is important (and is their right), education for social living on a basis of equality is just as, if not more, important. This will be difficult to achieve if students are cut off from contact after College hours. The students themselves must make the attempt to break down the artificial barriers. But this will take a long time, and the Africans in British Rhodesia, like their counterpart in the Southern States, will have to suffer humiliation in the process.

British Syndicalism - 3

Continued from p. 2

Syndicalism and the Anarchists

The development of a movement which placed primary emphasis not on political action but on direct action in the industrial field naturally attracted the pure anarchists. In 1903 Samuel Mainwaring had already founded a paper *The General Strike* which, for its short life, became the industrial supplement to *Freedom;* and in 1907 Guy Aldred and Charles Mowbray had formed The Industrial Union of Direct Actionists[10]. Inspired by the libertarian ideas of Bakunin and Kropotkin, its manifesto, addressed 'to the Wage Slaves of the World', urged a decentralised pattern of organisation in which each local group of workers would 'exercise perfect local autonomy'.

Aldred's group, however, was numerically small and soon disappeared. Thus anarchism in Britain provided no Pelloutier to lead the anarchists into the unions and give a libertarian direction to the trade union movement[11]. Dwarfed in size in comparison with the anarchist movement in France, the British anarchist movement at this time was dominated by the ideas of Kropotkin and Malatesta, the leading exponents of anarchist-communism, who had found refuge in this country. Their experience in the First International had convinced them that the trade unions could not be relied upon exclusively. Like all anarchists, Kropotkin accepted the idea of workers' control but he did not stress the need for building up workers' organisations so that they could both fight more effectively in the daily struggle against capitalism and also prepare themselves to become the administrative units of the future society. He took the view, as did most anarchists of that period, that the social revolution would come as a consequence of a general uprising of the whole mass of the people, in the course of which spontaneous associations would be thrown up to carry out the essential work of reconstructing and reorganising society. The single-minded emphasis of the syndicalists on the trade unions and their assumption that only the activities of the producers really mattered, seemed to him altogether too narrow a doctrine. Thus, when the younger French anarchists were flocking to join the new movement, he pointed out to them that Syndicalism was only the partial expression of anarchism as he conceived it[12].

The Need for Organisation

As against this view, the attitude of the 'pure' syndicalists to anarchism was best expressed by Van Eeden:

"Anarchism neglected the immense importance of organisation, and supposed the workers to be capable without leadership, without discipline, of achieving the tremendous task of creating a well-organised commonwealth. This was indeed Utopia in its worst sense. It jumped long periods of slow and difficult education. It did not teach the workers the terrible strength of their opponents, the exploiters. It did not realize how the intricate structure of modern society demanded great organizing capacities, scientific knowledge, economical insight, first-rate leadership, and strict discipline, in order to replace the old order by a new and better one. So anarchism was soon paralyzed and left behind in the struggle. It could strike, but not conquer. It proved to be destructive, not constructive. It withered for want of successful deeds."[13]

The new ferment in the industrial world did, however, result in the anarchists turning their attention once again to the trade unions. John Turner of the Shopworkers, for example, started, early in 1907, *The Voice of Labour* which devoted itself to trade union problems and Kropotkin himself came round to the view that the anarchists might usefully permeate the unions[14]. It was now Malatesta's turn to advise caution. The unions, he argued, contained valuable sources of strength but also elements of reaction; anarchists, therefore, should not identify themselves too closely with syndicalism[15].

Despite their ambivalent attitude during this period, the anarchists had, in the words of the historian of British syndicalism, "provided a steady stream of propaganda, information and discussion upon the developments of French syndicalism and, to a lesser degree, of American syndicalism. Their long, involved and desultory debate on Syndicalism had not resulted in any marked coalescence of the two movements, but it had assured that a considerable group of Englishmen were conscious of the progress of Syndicalist ideas".[16]

GEOFFREY OSTERGAARD.

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5 *Freedom*, Nov.-Dec. 1912.
6 The Socialist Labour Party: its aims and methods, 1903.
7 *Op. cit.* p. 32.
8 *Ib.* p. 16.
9 *Ib.* pp. 25-6.
10 Mainwaring and Mowbray provided a direct link with the Socialist League. Both were formerly contributors to *The Commonweal*.
11 Fernand Pelloutier, a French anarchist, who became the secretary and master-mind of the Bourses du Travail from which sprang effective labour organisation in France.
12 *cf.* G. Woodcock & I. Avakumovic: *The Anarchist Prince*, 1950, p. 294.
13 *The Syndicalist*, May 1912.
14 *cf. Freedom*, Oct. 1907.
15 The question of the relationship between anarchism and syndicalism was discussed at length at the International Anarchist Congress, Amsterdam, 1907, where Malatesta and Max Nettlau led the opposition to the coalescence of the two movements. See: *Freedom*, Sept.-Oct. 1907.
16 Eugene Burdick in his unpublished doctoral dissertation on *Syndicalism and Industrial Unionism in England until 1918*, Oxford University, 1950.

THE PROBLEMS OF AUTOMATION

SLAVERY OR LIBERTY

☛ Continued from p. 1

It is, therefore, essential for us to recognise that in order to embrace fully the opportunity which automation offers, the social patterns which must emerge, which will be in keeping with our technical possibilities, must be co-operative, libertarian and non-exploitive.

Abundance Possible

Perhaps for the first time in history, we can see ahead the possibility of men being able to produce abundance without drudgery, of leisure without scarcity, of well-being for all. The tremendous productive capacity of modern industry can now be made available without the monotonous repetitive toil which hitherto has degraded workers into sub-human adjuncts of the machine.

It will be possible to curtail the hours of socially necessary work (if that is what workers wish) and thus for the first time open up opportunities for cultural activities, individual or group productivity in a multitude of crafts, for travel, for the satisfaction and realisation of all their potentials by all the people.

This utopia is now easy to conceive. It will not, however, have an easy birth. If we are not very shortly to be suffering again as our forefathers suffered in the first industrial revolution—and with far more horrifying dangers in the background—then we must courageously face up to the intense and bitter struggle necessary for control of the means of production to pass from capitalist owners or state managers into the hands of the workers.

The dangers of this atomic and electronic age will only be completely averted by the socialisation of the means of production and distribution. By the end of their use for private profit or for state power. Competition between capitalists will bring internal chaos; competition between states will bring annihilation. The power to do this must be taken from those who misuse it today, and the means of life made freely available to all.

First the Idea . . .

THIS is the social revolution which automation is going to make not only desirable but necessary. How is it to be done?

In the first place there must be the recognition of this necessity. At all levels of society it must be realised that nothing can remain the same and that a vital choice has to be made. Workers, technicians and intellectuals can either divide into a slave mass governed by an élite, or they can join forces in the battle of ideas which is the first requirement for victory. The *idea* of socialisation of industry with workers' administration must be made acceptable as widely as possible. It is the only sensible alternative to economic chaos, war or slavery.

Arising out of the idea must come the *action*. For workers in industry the immediate task is the creation of organisations which will serve their tremendous purpose, and the development of methods of struggle which lead in that direction. For this, as can readily be seen, the existing trade unions are useless. Not only have they given no lead to their members, but the very nature of their function under capitalism makes it impossible that they can do so and their structure makes them ineffectual in face of the task that has to be done.

. . . Then the Organisation

The need for workers faced with automation is for *industrial* organisation, not craft. There are over a score of trade unions in the motor industry, a dozen in steel. The workers there can only fight a united battle by ignoring these organisational divisions—so why maintain them? They should create organisations which bring together all the workers in each industry united in their common purpose: to come into control of that industry.

And they should develop means of struggle which are in accord with that aim, *i.e.* which bring them nearer to control, not further from it. For example they could think in terms of stay-in strikes rather than walk-out. They should aim all the time at retaining the initiative and keeping in control of the situation. If they use their heads they can easily work out for themselves the best means for this. Their organisation should at all times be firmly based at the point of production—in the workshop, not in a union office outside. For it is of the workshop they must gain control, not of the union office.

It may be that the capitalists themselves will yield many points—such as more consultation with the unions. But such half-hearted measures will not be enough. Automation will not come about in a half-hearted fashion, nor will its effects be a mild adjustment of the current economy.

Be Wise and Strong!

Automation will bring an economic revolution to the world. For the vast majority of mankind it can bring either slavery or liberty, a mechanical hell or the free society. If we are to enjoy the latter we shall have to earn it. Of one thing we can be sure: nothing is going to be the same again and if we are wise and strong we can make automation the prelude to revolution. We can build a society in which all have free access to the means of life, without money; in which the satisfaction of human need is the motive for production; in which the institutions of authority have passed away; in which we organise our common wealth for our common benefit, and no man dominates another. This we can build—if we are wise and strong.

The Implications for Capitalism

☛ Continued from p. 1

Perhaps the next most likely alternative to war would be the introduction of systems of government throughout the world, more tightly controlled than ever before. In other words, semi-slave states involving dictatorship by a privileged economy and rigid direction of labour. This may be pictured as a condition approximating to a continued extension of the Stalinist régime with its use of slave labour on one national project after the other—*only far worse*.

More improbable than either of the two possibilities mentioned, might be the internationally agreed control of automation in order to purevent the final and almost inevitable collapse of the existing world economy. This is difficult to imagine as a possibility, for it would involve a very considerable degree of co-operation between all the remaining powerful states, and would tend to dispose of many of the inherent traits within capitalism itself.

There is of course a distinct likelihood that prior to some form of international defence against automation, a great measure of agricultural expansion might take place on a national scale in order to absorb surplus industrial labour. Nevertheless this could not solve the problem facing capitalism for very long, for the production of more food by industrial countries such as Britain would make it unnecessary for them to import foodstuffs in the quantities which they do at present. This would automatically diminish trade, since basically it is impossible to export goods to other countries without, at the same time, importing other goods from them. For trade at a profit *is* capitalism, and if trade diminishes so does capitalism.

The conclusions which may be drawn from what has been stated are therefore quite plain. They are that, contrary to general expectation, automation in the long-run is completely opposed to the interests of capitalism, and under certain circumstances could give rise to its downfall. That of the various means which capitalism could employ to avoid its fall from power, none are likely to have a beneficial effect upon the human race, nor assist the advance of progress. Therefore instead of the tremendous possibilities for the advancement of civilisation which automation and a reasonable social system could bring—the chances are that it will prove to be such a menace to the existing system that it will act as the instrument which binds us ever more securely to discipline and drudgery, instead of the device which opens the door to freedom and leisure.

H.F.W.

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!

WEEK 18

Deficit on *Freedom*	**£360**
Contributions received	**£437**
SURPLUS	**£77**

April 27 to May 3

Luton: J.C. 10/-; Colchester: W.G.P. 3/-; Falmouth: R.W. 3/6; Exmouth: A.B.H. 3/-; Avening: N.H. 1/6; New York: S.G. £1/2/0; London: P.C.O. 10d.; San Francisco: G.B.R. 14/-; Bakewell: D.M. 5/-; Mansfield: R.F. 6d.; Croydon: P.Q. 5/-; London: Anon. 5/-; London: N.B.T.* 3/3; Waltham Abbey: R.J.H. 3/-; London: Hyde Park Sympathiser 1/-; Welwyn: M.O.G. 10/-; Ilford: C.S. 6d.

Total	...	4 11 1
Previously acknowledged	...	432 16 11
1956 TOTAL TO DATE	...	£437 8 0

GIFT OF BOOKS: London: Anon.

*Indicates regular contributors.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS
Every Sunday at 7.30 at
THE MALATESTA CLUB,
32 Percy Street,
Tottenham Court Road, W.1.

MAY 13—BRAINS TRUST ON WORKERS' CONTROL*

MAY 20—*No meeting*

MAY 27—Mani Obahiagbon *on* TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF FREEDOM

JUNE 3—Ernest Bader *on* THE SCOTT-BADER COMMONWEALTH

June 10—*To be announced*

JUNE 17—Alfred Reynolds *on* THE BRIDGE: A WAY TO ANARCHISM?

**Workers' Control in Practice.* The Brains Trust on May 13 is intended to wind up the series. There will however, be one further meeting on this subject, on June 3.

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS
Every Thursday at 8.15.

OPEN AIR MEETINGS
Weather Permitting
HYDE PARK
Sundays at 3.30 p.m.
MANETTE STREET
(Charing X Road)
Saturdays at 5.30 p.m.

GLASGOW

At 200 BUCHANAN STREET, GLASGOW

OUTDOOR meetings at Maxwell Street, every Sunday ,commencing April 1st at 7.30 p.m.

LIBERTARIAN FORUM

813 BROADWAY,
(Bet. 11 & 12 Sts.)
NEW YORK CITY

Round-Table Youth Discussions
Friday Evenings at 8.30

May 18—Be A Magistrate!—For Pleasure and Profit.
May 25—Trade Unionism and Syndicalism.
June 1—*To Be Announced.*
June 8—Civil Liberties and the Supreme Court.
June 15—The Middle Eastern Situation.
June 22—The Relationship of the Family to Society.

Report from the FRENCH ANARCHISTS

Dear Comrades,

I am writing to you on behalf of CRIA (Commission for International Anarchist Relations) in order (1) *To give you an idea of the present state of the movement in France,* (2) *To invite you to participate, either directly or by correspondence, in the Congress of the Movement, to be held at Vichy on the 19th, 20th and 21st May,* (3) *To ask you to take part in the preparations for an international meeting to take place in June, in Paris, organized by the French comrades.*

Fraternal Greetings.
On behalf of the French Anarchist Federation,
The Secretary for International Relations.

I. THE SITUATION OF THE FRENCH MOVEMENT

I have been charged, as delegate for external relations, to renew the fraternal greetings of the *French Anarchist Federation*, which was reconstituted in Paris in December, 1953, after the defection of the authoritarian and parliamentary political faction which had managed to seize the periodical *Le Libertaire* and the Paris headquarters of the movement, after underhand activities over the years 1949-52. At the moment, this group of renegades who have got hold of the traditional organs of our movement, are completely isolated, although they try to disguise this fact by servile alliances with ex-Stalinists (Marty), Algerian nationalism (Massali Hadji) and by electoral demagogy (the candidature of Fontenis in the last legislative elections). On the other hand, the French Anarchist Federation, which remains faithful to the principles and methods of the international libertarian movement, is continually growing in strength, and can now count on almost all the experienced militants. Its journal *Le Monde Libertaire* has made itself a place in the unprejudiced opinion of the local organs of several provincial groups. It is on excellent terms with the other French libertarian periodicals (*Le Combat Syndicaliste, Contre-Courant, Défense de l'Homme, Pensée et Action, Témoins, l'Unique,* etc.) and all possible measures have been taken to avoid sectarianism and factional disputes. It is only necessary to have taken part in the Congresses of Christmas 1953 and Easter 1954 to realize that the fraternal spirit of anarchism in the F.A.F. is based on everyone's free agreement, and that questions of personality play no rôle at all.

II. THE CONGRESS BEING PREPARED

In 1956, showing our efforts at decentralization, the 3rd Congress of the FAF will take place at Vichy, where comrade Terrenoire has initiated such a wonderful amount of activity, both on the local and regional planes. Following in its tradition, the FAF has not only requested the presence of its own members, either as delegates of groups or as individual participants, but also that of members of friendly organisations, libertarian movements of international anarchism.

A special session will be set aside for the contributions, either vocal or written, of comrades belonging to anarchist groupings other than the FAF, and most particularly to comrades from abroad. (We don't like to use the word foreign).

Everyone should note the dates and particulars of the Congress in the appended convocation, and if they wish to participate, get in touch immediately with comrade Terrenoire, or with comrade Beaulaton, secretary for internal relations.

III. INTERNATIONAL MEETING

Another international anarchist demonstration organised by the FAF is to take place in Paris at the beginning of June, in the shape of a public meeting where militant anarchists of as many different countries as possible will expound (preferably in French) their personal points of view on the specific problems of their countries and the activities and ideas contributed by the anarchists. As will be seen, we are not concerned with a series of organisational reports, but with a meeting for information and public education, with speakers speaking for themselves.

Would everyone who feels inclined to assist in this initiative kindly let us know their chances of getting to Paris travel and lodging found by them? by us? by a sister organisation? etc.). We will try to work out a date and agenda to the convenience of as many as possible.

The CRIA for its part will make the most of the presence of international comrades in Paris to organise among them one or more sessions of round table discussions. There again, we ask all comrades interested in this initiative to communicate with us without delay, and let us know their suggestions and requirements.

Letters to the Editors

'FREEDOM' & ANARCHISM

DEAR FRIENDS,

I'm sorry I've allowed you to send me FREEDOM gratis for all those months after my subscription had run out. Much as I admire your generosity I feel you'd lose less money on the paper if readers were reminded earlier.

Although I've enjoyed reading your paper I am no longer satisfied that you have a satisfactory alternative in Anarchism. Your most important function is opposing authoritarian trends in our society and this you do very well indeed. However, I'm convinced that civilized life in a modern industrial society demands a system of law and a central authority. FREEDOM is good on the critical side but suffers from the fact that most of anarchist thought hasn't changed since the 19th century.

Yours sincerely,

Bromley, April 28 R.P.

[*Our correspondent may be right that "anarchist thought hasn't changed since the 19th century"—though we need hardly say we believe that we speak and think in 20th century terms!—but may we point out to him that his arguments, if they profess to be socialist are those of the reformist socialists of the late 19th century, and if they do not even profess to be socialist, are as old as capitalism, or even older! By referring to "modern" industrial society doesn't make his thinking modern. The idea of "central authority" was current before the industrial era and has nothing to do with technical problems of production.*—EDITORS].

★

DEAR SIRS,

I value the paper FREEDOM as it represents many sound ideas which will have to be acted upon if this civilization is to survive—and a condition of its survival is, that by hook or by crook the present triumphant conspiracy to enslave the world by means of the doctrine of "employment" must be defeated. How this is to be done no-one seems to know—all *I* know is that the new order which must replace the present wretched state of affairs will have to be a sort of amalgam of Anarchism, Pacifism and Social Credit—all of which have this all-important principle in common—Revolt against the-pseudo-authoritarian-conspiracy-against-the-human-individual.

Yours sincerely,

Richmond, April 28. E.A.

ANARCHIST SUMMER SCHOOL, 1956

The annual Anarchist Summer School will be held in London on the 4th, 5th and 6th of August, 1956. The cost has not yet been estimated, nor is the list of speakers complete. But enquiries regarding accommodation may be addressed to:
Joan Sculthorpe, c/o Freedom Press.

Malatesta Club

SWARAJ HOUSE,
32 PERCY STREET,
TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON, W.1.
(Tel.: MUSeum 7277).

ACTIVITIES

Every Sunday at 7.30 *p.m.*
London Anarchist Group Meetings
(see Announcements Column)

Every Wednesday at 8 *p.m.*
BONAR THOMPSON Speaks.

Every Thursday at 8 *p.m.*
INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS will be arranged.

Every Saturday:
SOCIAL EVENING.

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12 months 17/- (U.S.A. $3.00)
6 months 8/6 (U.S.A. $1.50)
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Special Subscription Rates for 2 copies
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6 months 13/6 (U.S.A. $2.25)
Cheques, P.O.'s and Money Orders should be made out to FREEDOM PRESS, crossed a/c Payee, and addressed to the publishers
FREEDOM PRESS
27 Red Lion Street
London, W.C.1. England
Tel.: Chancery 8364

Printed by Express Printers, London, E.1. Published by Freedom Press, 27 Red Lion Street, London, W.C.1.